

Lawful Evil
Zine
2018

*Classified!!
keep out of fool's
hands under all
circumstances!*

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Phoenix Wright = Ace Attorney



Suspects
Serp. Meg Cal,
Robbie Kon'y'n,
Manfred

Power Outage

By serp

February 25, ????

???????

The chains on a pair of silver handcuffs clink. A figure sat on a metal bench sways from side to side with the rocking of the vehicle. Light slants through the barred window on the side of the drab gray prisoner transport truck. A dark shadow hides the man's eyes from view.

The two guards, clad in dark uniform, one on either side of the truck, don't say a word.

The hulking figure of the man who had once been Damon Gant leans forward and settles his elbows on his knees.

"Lighten up, kiddos," he chuckles, seeing the narrowed eyes and barely-concealed glances from the security guards from the corrections facility. "I'm not going to do anything to you."

One of the guards is sweating. A clammy sheen of dampness coats his forehead. He seems to be physically restraining himself from tapping his foot. Gant's gaze slides to the other one. The other guard is watching him openly, with a look of poorly concealed disgust on his features.

"Something to say, son?" Gant smiles jovially. The glint of his teeth is sharp and calculating.

The corrections officer sneers at him.

"I don't have anything to say to you." He mutters. "Scumbag."
Gant sighs.

"Is this how you treat convicted criminals?" He sighs. "No wonder none of them want to reform."

He grins.

"Not that I'm particularly fond of criminals, either." He says, sitting back again and stretching his shoulders. "But, then again, I won't have the luxury of choosing my company, where I'm going."

"Shut up." The more brazen guard says, fire leaking into his voice, hand going to his belt reflexively. Gant eyes him. "Someone who abused their power, the trust of the police department, and killed your own law enforcement officials has no right to talk!"

The more timid guard's fingers inch toward his own belt. He glances nervously between Gant and his fellow officer.

The truck rocks violently. The sound of a pothole being bumped over echoes through its metal frame. Gant tenses on the bench, and the more aggressive guard falls back into his seat from where he'd been tensing to get at Gant, reaching back to catch himself on the metal.

"Sorry," comes a muffled voice from the front. The driver. "Hit a ditch."

Tense silence settles back over the transport car. Gant tugs at the handcuffs around his wrists experimentally. This court case- a tale of corruption reaching to the highest boughs of the hierarchical tree- will have shaken the justice system of the entire city to its roots. His case is probably high priority, he thinks resignedly, and he'll be lucky to spend even a day in the detention center in his own clothes before they process him and send him to prison.

"You don't have to worry about that, officer." Gant smiles, sitting back, closing his eyes, setting his head against the metal of the transport vehicle's wall. Behind his eyelids, two figures stand tall against the darkness. "You kids will be fine with Wright-o and Worthy at the helm."

The guards eye him out of the corners of their vision. The broad-shouldered man in the orange suit seems almost nostalgic for things lost. The truck stops. The doors open, and the man formerly known as Damon Gant stands to face the sunlight again, with a long-lost smile on his face.



By Robbie Konjin

"Hey. Thought I should mention - this'll be the last time I sit with you boys. I'm out tomorrow."

The two men on either side of her look up from their bland prison grub, as April continues eating, avoiding eye contact.

"Congratulations," Yanni musters up.

"You won't forget about us when you leave, will you?" Frank asks. "If you can find it within your good and generous heart to... please send me some books. I've had my eye on anything by Elise Deauxnim. *Elise*, though - don't get me anything from that no-good student of hers, Laurice."

April laughs. "You're a leech, Frankie."

Yanni puts down his spoon.

"How long have you been in for, girl? It's been... quite some time, and you've never actually told us what you did. I've been wondering about it."

"One and a half years. For wiretapping." She pauses. "And you?"

"You know what I've done."

"I know what Frankie's done, too. But I wanted to hear it from you."

Frank pouts. "Everyone knows that I've done. All because of that horrible warden..."

It's not the warden. Sahwit's been far too frank about his crimes, and gossip travels quickly between inmates. That's the reason April's kept her pretty mouth shut up until now - while Frank gets sneer over his failed arrangement with the supplier, April would get something far worse if things got back to Mr. White, especially while he is in prison, too.

It won't be her problem for much longer, though.

"... I killed my former defense attorney, Hammond. I lost everything, because of that man... and then, one day, a letter arrived, detailing how I could obtain my revenge on him. I didn't question it. Didn't think. I simply went through with it, and nearly got away with it, too. I almost framed an innocent boy for my crimes, twice. This is my retribution, I suppose - I lost Polly by following the selfish plot of one evil man, then my freedom by following the selfish plot of another. In the end, I let myself be someone else's pawn, over and over."

April finally meets his eye.

"Just a pawn, huh? Guess that's our common theme, then."

"Don't get me wrong," Yanni adds. "I've felt enough regret and bitterness to make sweet for a lifetime. The only thing I wish now is that I'd owned up to my actions sooner, instead of suffering for so long, alone."

It lines up with the stories she's heard. The "innocent boy" Yanni refers to is a central figure to the cases of many prisoners here - including her own - and even though Yanni keeps to himself and acts senile, it was far too interesting for people to not talk about. April generally doesn't like to pry - knowledge is trouble - but she'll admit she finds it interesting, too.

"I - I wish I could say the same," Frank says.

"You have regrets?" April asks.

Frank hesitates.

"I killed a girl - it was a mistake! But it was my own stupid mistake. I started out pickpocketing... and now I'm here. It's as though every time I'm offered a choice, I'm overcome with something evil which makes me choose the wrong thing. And if this is the punishment God intended for me, then He punishes me for every attempt at being better and lightening my sentence, too. I should never have went down the path of crime."

April shakes her head. "You shouldn't have."

He's spineless, she thinks. She supposes she was, too.

"Do you have regrets, girl?" Yanni asks. "Wiretapping doesn't seem much of a crime... but there must have been a reason for you to end up where you did, too."

"It wasn't just wiretapping. I was an accomplice to murder," she says, cold now. "He threatened to hurt me if I didn't... I should never have gotten involved with a man like that in the first place."

"... I'm sorry."

They all fall silent for a while, and turn their attention back to the food none of them like. They might already have known from the way Mr. White speaks to her when he does.

Click click, the sound of their spoons. April can feel her face flushing, suddenly ashamed, remembering what she did. What an idiot she was. She should truly never have gotten involved with a man like that. Was she even really in love, or was she just afraid?

Frank breaks the silence. "We've all been used by others, haven't we?"

"I - I suppose," April says.

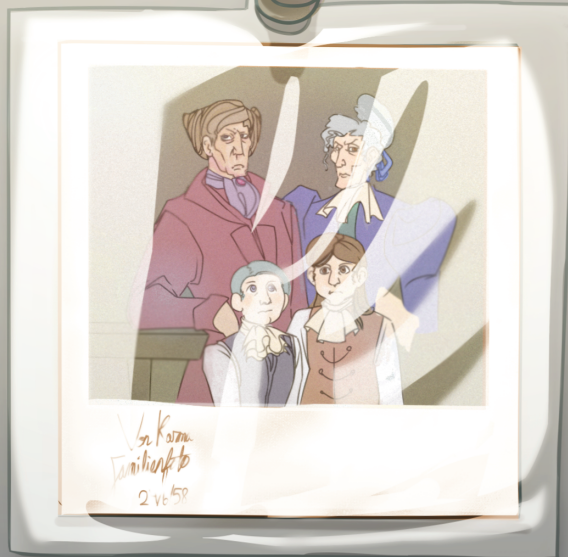
"We're all in here because we've done unforgivable things... but we've been victims of circumstance, as well. Of the greed and selfishness of other people."

April cracks a smile. "Trying to console me, Frankie?"

"I'm just saying."

She wonders - he must be alone. Yanni too. All three of them were cut off from the world, through misplaced trust and bad decisions.

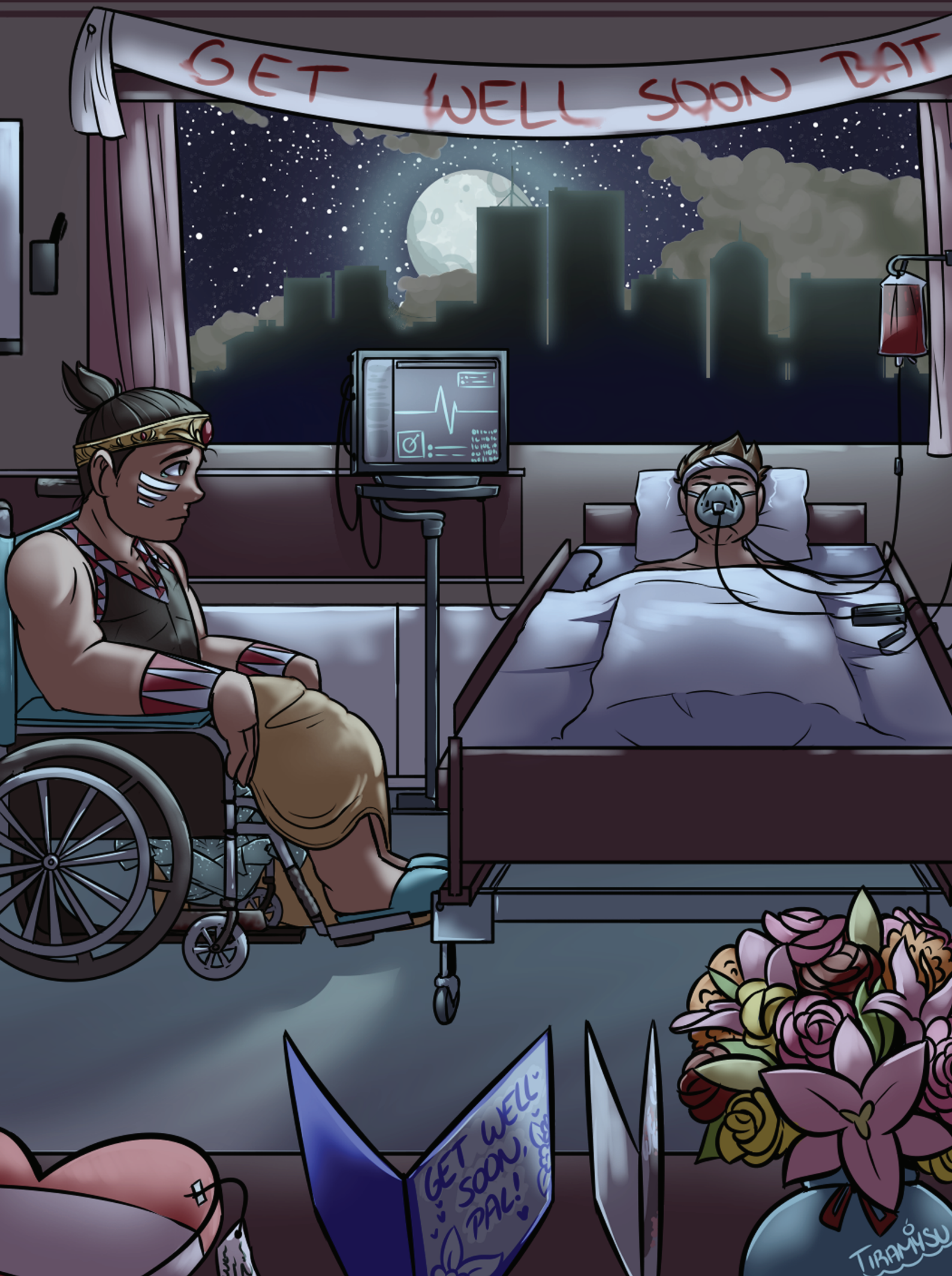
"I'll write you two. No promises on the books, though."





Phoenix Wright =
Ace Attorney =
Justice for All

Suspects
tiramysu, Rey,
Sleepy espurr,
Wholahayola











Phoenix Wright =
Ace Attorney =
Trials + Tribulations

Suspects

RD, Dahlia,
Nadilee, M. Browne,
Cinnabunart,
Vivi



By Dahlia

Kurain was a place of routine - wake up, train, strengthen your powers, don't talk back, always use your manners. It was a waste to even be there if you didn't have any sort of powers. Not abandoned, but not quite alive, if you were to blink you'd miss it. There's a strange Kurain myth, though, of two girls, a perfect mirrored image, standing under the waterfall for hours at a time every day. Swimming laps in the freezing, rapids of the Eagle River. Somehow finding warmth in the way the cold water falls onto their skin. Chasing each other through the flowers and patches of snow, not stopping until the sun went down and the streetlights came on.

-

Dahlia Hawthorne sat there blinking at the tear stained pages in front of her, faded photographs lining the old book. She doesn't miss Kurain much, but sometimes the nostalgia sinks in, and not even the shady oak tree outside the pharmaceutical department could fix it.

She's looking at a picture of a girl, no older than seven, smiling, a big toothless grin as freckles line her rosy cheeks. There's a girl behind her, the same perfect reflection sitting on a rotted swing. Matching pink and purple dresses.

-

The images race around her head, flashing back over and over again. The way the two chased each other around the back yard while the other girls were stuck inside training. The way they'd sneak out to swim in the Eagle River, Dahlia letting the cold water wash over her skin as Iris sat in the grass, picking the flowers and making crowns.

"Maggie?" Dahlia asks, sitting up on her elbows at the end of the river, her hair dangling a few wet strands in front of her face. "Why do you always make crowns instead of swimming with me?"

"Because they're beautiful and bright. I'd rather focus on that than be cold."

Dahlia shrugs and goes back underwater.

-

The snow is lighter here, it doesn't seem to stick as much as it did in Kurain, and yet people seem to bundle up like they're hiking the mountains. Dahlia can't help but laugh as she brushes something off her bare legs.

-

"She needs a magatama."

"She can have mine! It's not like I use it anyway." Dahlia shrugs and takes the rose quartz stone from her neck before hanging it on the snowman in front of her, "There! Now she's beautiful."

Iris lets out a giggle, nose scrunching as she runs in to get the camera from their mother.

"Melissa! Mommy said you can't put your magatama on the snowman, you'll need it one day"

"When?"

The older twin lets out a shrug as she hands the necklace back to her sister. "She's naked now," she says through a small smile.

-

Dahlia stares at the books lining the shelves of the library. There's endless books about spirit channeling, but she can't help but smirk at the way it's presented in all of them - some kind of circus hoax or a magic trick.

"I've seen real exorcisms since before I could walk, and they're treating it like a joke."

-

"There's a channeling session tonight."

Dahlia twists her black hair around her finger as she stares at the chipping ceiling in front of her. "There's always a channeling session, we still can't watch."

Iris nudges her in the ribcage before giving her a smirk. "Not if we don't leave now, we can't."

Dahlia sits up and laughs, taking her sister's hand and tip toeing across the creaky wooden floors to the large chamber across the house.

"We have to be quiet." Iris whispers almost too loudly before Dahlia firmly presses a pink finger across her lips.

"I've always wondered what it's like to come back from the dead... Do you think they're going to be scared?"

-

There's a fundraiser in the quad to raise money for the elementary school to get a language program, and Dahlia can't help but to smile.

-

"French?"

"Oui, Valerie. Je comprendes?"

"That's Spanish."

Dahlia lets out an exasperated sigh before rolling over dramatically to her back, "I give up."

"Don't talk like that, I'm fluent, I can always help you! Come here, I want to try something. I got some red hair dye and I think it would totally highlight your features, especially your eyes. They're gorgeous."

Dahlia lets out a small shrug as she follows her new step sister into the bathroom. She watches as the water in the sink turns a grotesque shade of crimson, like she's washing blood off her hands.

"You look like a new person. I wonder how Margaret feels about this."

Dahlia blinks, then blinks again.

She's never been her own person.

Something about it is refreshing, but there's a small pain in her chest as she breathes out.

Melissa Fey is gone, and so are her memories of Kurain.



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*Made special
for Furio Tigre.*

-Viola

By cinnabunart

The girl knew the path ahead of her from a previous hike she had taken a few years back, but she hadn't gone down this specific trail yet. The clothes she was wearing were unsuited for the mountainous terrain around her, but she still hiked on her path, as the rough grasses scratched at her legs and the rocky ground pierced through her flats.

It took the young woman fifteen minutes to reach the towering Hazakura temple. The entrance gate was wide open, allowing her to walk right into the courtyard.

There, she saw her mirror image. A girl her age with the same looks as her. In the twelve years they had been apart, the young woman standing there was different in only the tiniest ways. She had matured, obviously, but her hair was the same jet black it had always been, in contrast to the girl's own crimson locks. She was also wearing a traditional purple robe with a replica magatama attached to them.

Judging by the look of shock on the others face, she had not expected to see anyone but the people who lived with her today. Her mouth was agape, and she stuttered when she spoke.

"D-Dahlia? Is that... you?"

Dahlia gave a soft smile and nodded to her twin sister.
"Yes, it's me. Are you free today, Iris?" She asked.

Iris just stared in shock.

"Of course she's startled," Thought Dahlia, giving her sibling a confused look. It was a simple question after all, but she wasn't expecting Iris to respond instantly.

"Y-Yes, I am, but... Why are you here?" Iris shook her head and spoke in utter disbelief.

Dahlia smirked and produced a wallet from her back pocket, waving it around in one hand, while the other hand went to her lips as she made a 'shush' motion.

"I'm 'borrowing' this from my older sister, Valerie. I wanted to take you to the mall, just us two," Dahlia said, "Is that alright with you?"

The rose haired girl awaited her sister's response impatiently, a little bit too impatient, as she began to tap her foot only moments after finishing her sentence.

Iris looked incredibly nervous as she swept her eyes across the empty courtyard, checking something.

After an uncomfortable pause of conversation on both ends, Iris looked back at Dahlia and nodded.

"Yes. I've finished everything I'm supposed to do today so... I think it's alright."

Dahlia smiled politely, almost coldly, and nodded. "Good!" She said affirmingly, "I have a taxi waiting at the base of the mountain."

Iris didn't know what to say. She looked so startled and confused at seeing her twin sister.

Dahlia found it odd. "*She should be excited, even happy to see me. Why isn't she?*" She thought.

But the taxi would not wait for much longer.

Dahlia grabbed her sister's hand and began marching down the path again. Iris was quiet, obediently following her fiery sister.

There were small huffs and winces as Dahlia's shoes were pierced again and again by the rocky ground, but Iris just seemed to step quietly over them, tracing her sister's shoe prints.

"*How odd,*" thought Dahlia.

The 15 minute descent back down the mountain were the most arduous and awkward minutes of Dahlia's life. Her twin made no attempt at conversation whatsoever and just continued to silently pace behind her, looking down. This is why Dahlia hated the theory that twins were psychically linked. She felt more confused by her sister than connected.

"Perhaps I'll find out more about her once we go out."

Dahlia looked up and spotted the yellow roof of the taxi, hearing the stalling car engine.

"There it is," She said to her sibling.





Apollo Justice: Ace Attorney



Duik Knicker
123 Apple St.
Blazing Springs, CA 92311

Suspects
Jay, Soren

Prosecutor
Puppet Pals!





special thanks
to
CAPCOM & the AA staff!



Het Is Zover: de HAT-1 Lancering!

What the HAT-1 did you just an incredible feat of modern technology was about sending people into outer space for the first time you little rocket launch? I'll have you know Ms. Wright, I graduated top of her class in the Ace Attorney School of Law, and she's been involved in some of the most important cases of the effects of outer space on the human mind. They've over 100 cases and the HAT-1 is the first one.

are trained in a school where they're directly in outer space as efficiently as possible. It's a real challenge. The subject is the most important.

crafts but just a moment. Rockets are expensive, and the HAT-1 is a one-time launch with no return. The HAT-1 is the first of which has ever been launched. The HAT-1 is the first of which has ever been launched. The HAT-1 is the first of which has ever been launched.

about the advanced research equipment the HAT-1 is bringing, science. As we the HAT-1 is conducting its secret network of spies across the Igqualfide and your IP is being traced right now so you better prepare for the solar storm, HAT-4. The solar storm that wipes out the last remains of doubt you call conspiracy. Interspersed. You're raised by Indians, kid. I can be angry, anytime, and they love young Athena is over seven hundred ways, and that's just on

this place of existence. Not only are astronauts extensively trained in unarmed combat, but they have access to the entire arsenal of the United States Space



Phoenix Wright =
Ace Attorney =
Dual Destinies



Suspects
Jack, Sam,
Linkala,
Kagumari



Phantom

By Sam

He's alone in here, and he can't remember a time when he wasn't. So many years of wearing different faces and becoming different people, moving into lives and sometimes taking them, constantly surrounded by those he pretended were allies or friends or enemies—it never broke the isolation his missions had insulated him with, never made him need anything beyond the completion of a task. Sitting here in the city's most secure prison cell, by himself, simply means several more decades of what the first half of his life had already been.

It doesn't matter if that seems off. It doesn't matter if there's a small whisper in his mind telling him that, surely, no one has ever truly been alone their entire life. He ignores it, wills himself to bury it under practiced stoicism and nothingness. He makes himself as blank as the cell around him. It doesn't matter, he tells himself. It doesn't matter.

(I don't remember anything before the year prior to HAT-1, he'd said.

The interrogator had looked at him with what his training recognized as skepticism and disgust. What do you mean, you don't remember?

It means I don't remember, he'd repeated, and the realization that so much of his life was simply gone had rendered him silent for hours.)

He screws his eyes shut, recoiling from something that feels like physical pain. It doesn't matter, he thinks again. It doesn't matter if he's alone, or if he can't remember, or if nothing feels right. The mission's over. The sniper who shot him in the courtroom has been caught. And he's locked away, finally, paying for everything he's done. There's nothing here now, nothing waiting for him later, nothing left behind to pick up.

Nothing. He takes a breath in. Nothing. He lets a breath out. Nothing. He immerses himself in his training again, but why is something he's done for so long suddenly so hard to get back into? Nothing. His eyes are still shut tight and he runs a hand over his—

(—face. He'd seen his face in the one-way mirror of the interrogation room, the first thing he'd seen when he walked in. He'd never been able to see his face and he doubted that he'd ever been allowed to, and he couldn't quite suppress the disappointment that had boiled in his throat when he saw that he looked much older than he'd expected.)

His breathing is shaky as he pulls his fingers from his face. His mind wonders how long it's been, how it could become something like this, why did this happen but he shuns its incessant questions. He doesn't think about the interrogation. He doesn't think about the courtroom. He doesn't think about breaking down, screaming—

(What am I?! Who am I?! He hadn't been able to stop his head from buzzing and whirling and shouting at him until the bullet hit him unconscious—)

"Stop," he says, but his mind won't listen.

(What is he? Who is he? The younger Cykes had called him a man, but he doesn't know what that means. Is he a he? A she? A they, a zhe? Or is he not a person at all, just some horrible, inhuman creation like he'd always suspected—)

"Stop," he says again, but it's too late—

(New face, new person. Always moving. Blood on hands. No purpose beyond keeping himself alive and hidden, but what's the point? Alone, always alone. Cykes, Arme, Terran, Fulbright—everyone he'd taken from this world, they all had someone. Friends. Families. People they loved, people they hated. Surely, no one has ever truly been alone their entire life. Not even you—)

"Stop—"

(Do you remember? Can you remember? Before you lost your face, your name, your life. What are you? Who are you? You should know—)

"Please—"

(It's been so long. How could it become something like this? Why did this—)

"It doesn't matter!" he shouts.

And suddenly, it's quiet. He listens to his own breathing steady for a few seconds, testing the silence, and opens his eyes. All he sees is the cell caging him, empty and blank. Like himself.

Nothing. He takes a breath in. Nothing. He lets a breath out. Nothing. He sinks back into his training, back into the nothingness that had kept him alive, and ignores the tears that run down the face he hadn't seen in years.



By kagumari

Aura folds her arms tightly against her chest, fingernails digging into her sleeves. She stares directly at Simon from across the glass of the visitor's room in the detention center. She considers shattering the glass and storming out solely to prove a point.

Despite her anger, despite the intense nausea that comes in waves every few minutes when she thinks about her little brother being sentenced to death, she wants to see him. She wants to talk to him, she wants him to walk out from the glass and tell her that he was wrong, he wasn't confessing, he's going to go home with her.

She leans forward, and raps her knuckles harshly against the glass. She grits her teeth, the other hand still clenched against her side of the table. "Do you have any idea what you're doing?"

Simon says nothing, but continues to make eye contact. She chokes down a scream from the back of her throat. A moment of silence passes between them, and she taps harder on the glass the second time. "Are you even fucking listening to me?"

Simon flinches for a moment, and closes his eyes. "Why are you doing this?"

Aura jolts back in her seat, hands flying to grip the edge of her chair. "Why am I doing this? Why am I doing this to *you*?"

She laughs shrilly and pulls back, as if she's surprised that any noise came out of her mouth at all. She sighs, hands trembling as they push her bangs out of her eyes. "You make me laugh, Simon."

"You're upset," he says, tentatively, as if he was thirteen years old again, and had accidentally broken one of her drills.

"No," she laughs. "Of course not. I'm fucking *furious*." She fixes her bangs again, and breaks the eye contact that he had been maintaining, staring intently at her heels. "You didn't d--"

"I did," he cuts her off, calmly. His voice is even, it doesn't waver like hers does. She bites her tongue, an onslaught of different curses she could scream at him to try and make him feel some fraction of remorse that she could physically see.

"I'm not taking care of your bird," she says, before storming out.

Aura taps her fingers against the table of the detention center, opposite from the side she has been so accustomed to sitting at for the past seven years.

She watches as Simon crosses one leg over the other from the other side of the glass after folding his coat over the back of his chair to ensure it doesn't drag on the ground.

"So," she leans forward with a smirk on her face. She looks over his face, and is relieved to see that he looks a little more alive than he was before. "What's it like having all this time on your hands?"

"I supp--"

"By the way, you're welcome, again, for that."

He raises an eyebrow. "Pardon?"

"Giving you all of this free time. The rest of your life. You can thank me whenever." She smiles again, resting her chin on the back of her hand. Simon grins, involuntarily matching the look on Aura's face.

"I don't recall--"

"No, you didn't ask me to do anything, but I did anyways. Purely out of the kindness of my own heart."

"You know, Aura, you could at least let me finish t--"

"No."

Simon passes a hand over his eyes. "Fine, then. Go on."

Aura cocks her head for a moment, and refuses to let the grin fall off of her face. She doesn't have anything planned to say to him. He's visited these past few weeks after her sentence, and doesn't intend to stop following through like she had-- at least he knows she's getting out of this place alive. She doesn't want to talk about it, she wants to quip at her brother until he leaves. She's tired of the heaviness of it all.

Simon shakes his head, and gives her that damn stare that she *knows* means that he's trying to analyze something about her, the bastard.

"Do you actually want to talk?" he asks.

"No," she says, and folds her arms against her chest again.

Simon leans back in his chair and raises his hands level to his shoulders, spreading them far apart, farther than any chain could have held them together. "I might not be here when you finally want to," he warns.

"Maybe I'll never want to," she tries, but she knows she's lying. He knows she's lying, too. It takes time to process, but it's too soon right now.

He shakes his head looks at her with that stupid half-smile and for a split second, Aura feels like she's looking back into a mirror.

Phoenix Wright =
Ace Attorney =
Spirit of Justice



By cteranodon

Paul Atishon's palanquin had almost made it to the cave face, although his crew had begun lagging, tired out by carrying him up the slope of Mt. Mitama. Maybe if he hadn't had to rush them, they'd be performing better now. No time to dwell on what-ifs, though, since he'd been banned from using his palanquin at night.

(His first action as mayor would be to overturn that ban. That was his campaign promise to himself.)

If his instinct was, as usual, right, then he had less than an hour before the Defiant Dragons figured out that Dr. Buff had hidden the orb inside this cave. He wasn't a spelunking expert, though, so he didn't know how much of a head start he'd actually need.

The palanquin was lowered to the ground, and Paul took his cue to step out, flashlight in hand.

Around him, his workers were all on the ground, panting. The imposing cave entrance stood before him. It was ominously quiet, as though something had devoured the noise itself and was hungry for another serving.

Paul wasn't about to go in that cave alone. He'd have to wait a few minutes until somebody caught their breath.

With a theatrical sigh, he turned around, to look down at Kurain Village. Thinking on it, he hadn't been up this high in years. It was a stunning view of his soon-to-be domain. Up here, he could have a full appreciation for all the buildings, the tiny specks that were people roving the town, the clockwork that lay under the surface keeping the tradition of channeling alive.

That aside, there was something poetic about being as high above them physically as he was spiritually.

He was pleased to hear the sound of one of his workers drinking from a water bottle. He turned and grabbed the worker by the elbow, pulling them into the cave. "Let's find my crystal," he said. "The rest of you, get the palanquin out of sight, and stay quiet."

Into the cave they went, Paul's flashlight turned on.

“We know Dr. Buff entered this cave network from the ocean side,” Paul reminded the worker. “That means we have to try to go *downward*!”

The worker chuckled. “Or we could try the other entrance, and go *drownward*!”

“That was a really good one, but I’m not paying you to make puns. Don’t do it again.”

“Yes, sir. Sorry, sir.”

They rounded a corner, and found what they were looking for. Kind of.

The tunnel continued forward, but another tunnel branched downward, sloping severely and taking up about a third of the width of the tunnel floor.

Paul peered over the ledge, flashlight bouncing in his hand to reveal every inch. “Well, I see the bottom,” he said. “That fall *might* not kill somebody. . .”

“I’m not jumping down there, sir,” the worker said.

“I wasn’t about to ask you to.”

“Thank you—”

“My palanquin won’t carry itself, after all.” Paul smiled encouragingly at the worker. “We’ll just wait for one of those Dragons to come by.”

“And then what?” the worker asked.

“Hmmm.” Paul looked back down the pit. “Let me try something.” He turned the flashlight off, and they were surrounded by complete darkness.

A silent, still minute passed. Paul knew no one could see his winning smile, but that didn’t stop him from letting it grow larger and larger. Even as his eyes adjusted, it stayed completely dark.

“One of the very first lessons of kingcraft,” he explained in an excited whisper, “is to keep an open mind to knowledge from kings of all kinds.”

“What kind of king are you talking about?” the worker asked.

“Kings of animation, Hanna and Barbera. You ever watch those kids’ mystery shows, with the dog, and the masked monsters, and the woman who dropped her glasses, and the, the, the, the, the *nonviolent crimes*?”

“Uh, yes...?”

Paul guided them both to the cave wall, just across from the branching tunnel.

“The real lesson of that show is how much you can get away with when your enemies can’t see you.”

They waited in silence for a few more short minutes, before Paul’s grand vision came to fruition.

“I-I really think we need a flashlight, Dhurke.”

“Should’ve brought one along, then, son.”

With a barely contained snicker, Paul stepped towards the voices. “Here. Use mine.”





The Great Mr. Reus

Revenge Doesn't Taste Sweet

By Jack

As a prisoner who often kept himself to himself, Diego was able to sit in the corner of the cafeteria, a styrofoam cup of shitty prison coffee pressed against his lips, only moving every so often to take a sip and cringe at the awful, bitter aftertaste. That was the day-to-day routine, in between idle hours waiting for nothing in his cell, aside from the monthly visit of a young girl and her cousin who still held him in dear regard, for reasons that were beyond him. And though he would never admit it, he welcomed a face that was somewhat friendly - even if she was accompanied by the look of an old face, an equally familiar attorney.

Today, though, there was an adjustment to the everyday monotony of prison life. A recently convicted man, the sleeves of his orange jumpsuit rolled up to reveal a scar on his right arm, one ugly and old that reminded him of his own, hidden underneath his mask as it had been when he first got it. Diego watched in silence as this man, his face neutral yet so concealed in a sinister, hateful emotion, approached the coffee machine that tended to be avoided due to the liquefied sludge it emitted. And yet, he did it with no fear, the new-to-prison naivete that was common among the first time offenders that were within these walls... though it took no expert observer to see that he didn't enjoy it, from the way his nose wrinkled. From his comfortable cafeteria seat, Diego couldn't help but chuckle, perhaps a bit too loudly as, upon looking up after taking a terrible drink of the equally terrible coffee, he found a glare being thrown his way.

"Something funny?"

"Ah, no, of course not. I was simply amused you didn't realise earlier that the coffee here is garbage, considering the lack of customers to its stand." He gestured with his cup around the cafeteria - sure enough, cups to match his were sparse, if not totally non-existent.

The man frowned. "And yet, you're sat there, drinking it."

"Eh, coffee is coffee. Even if it isn't brewed with care and consistency."

He rolled his eyes slightly, looking into his own cup with a slight scowl, before sighing a little. "...Whatever."

Diego watched as, again, this man took a drink and wrinkled his nose at the taste, before shaking his head. He hated it here, that much was clear. And the hard truth was, things weren't going to get better.

After idle chatter a distance away, the man now sat opposite him, staring into the brown mess in the cup he held with a strength that seemed to be more than capable to crush it and let the coffee spill over and burn his hands without a care. His face was too tired, too solemn and held quiet anger, to care to yell in pain. It was a half-parallel to years before that Diego didn't want to think too hard about.

Roger Retinz, former Ratings Rajah, locked away for the murder of his assistant and framing a young magician - a rival, a girl he hated - for said murder, all for the sake of revenge on her father and his master. It was... a twisted scheme and motive, no doubt, one that made him even worried about that man, the father to the girl who had been caught up in this plan of revenge. Again, the familiarity was almost funny, if not sickening, so if anyone was in a place to criticise...

"These kinds of things are not easy to stomach, but you cannot put creamer into a cup of tea."

Retinz raised an eyebrow - another person not accustomed to proverbial expressions. Diego laughed slightly.

"It wasn't your place to stick your nose into this girl's business, personal vendetta or no. She was not the one who took away your career, no matter what her position is in this current time and place."

"...Tsh. You speak from experience, I assume."

"You could say that."

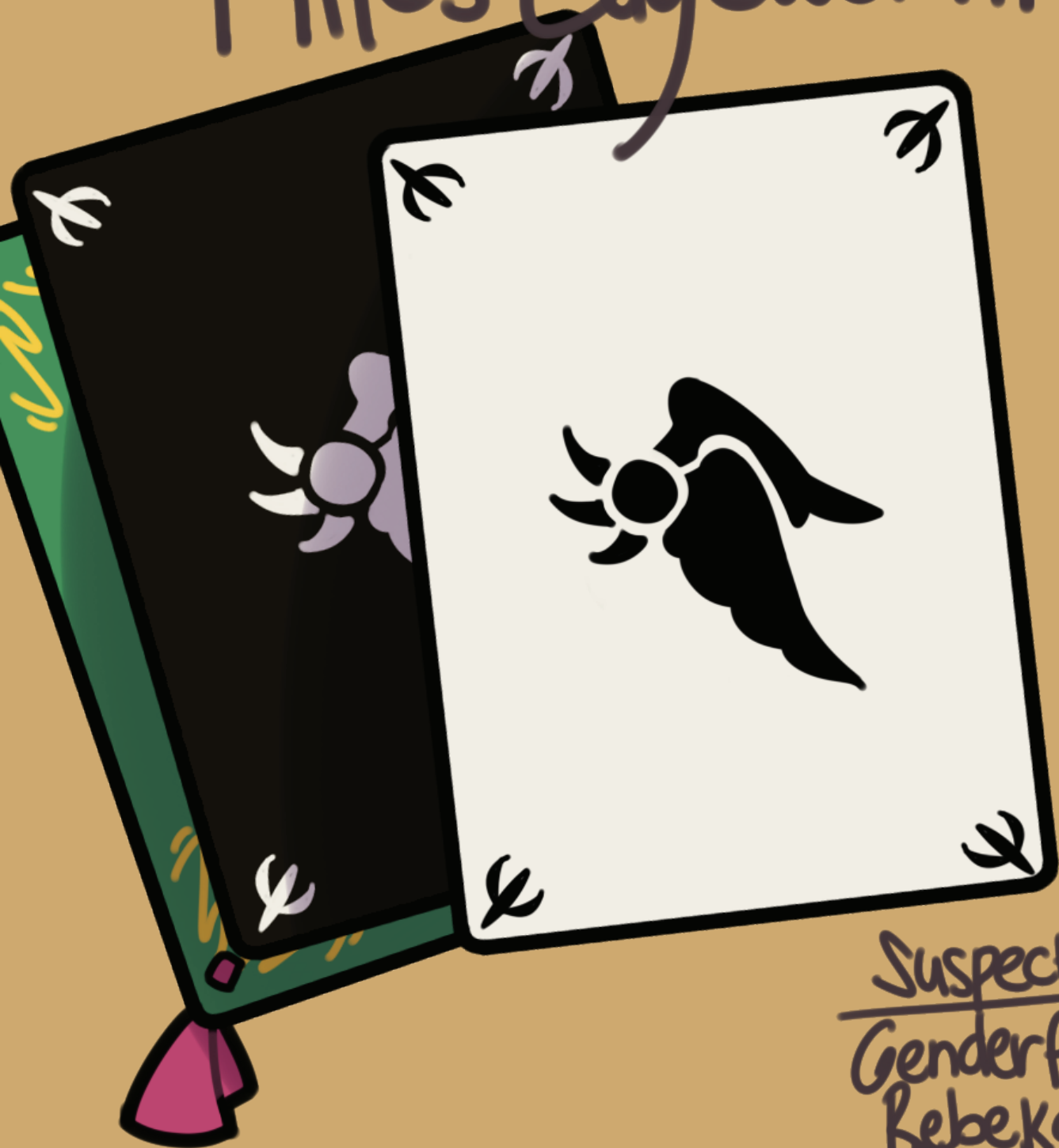
"Do you regret what you did?"

He paused for a moment to think, gathering his answer as he finished the rest of his sub-par prison coffee. "...Depends on the day."

"Then, that's where you and I differ. The only thing I regret is getting caught." He, too, finished the rest of his coffee, before clenching his fist and crushing the cup with little effort, leaving it where it was as he got up and left, just as there was the call to return to the cells.

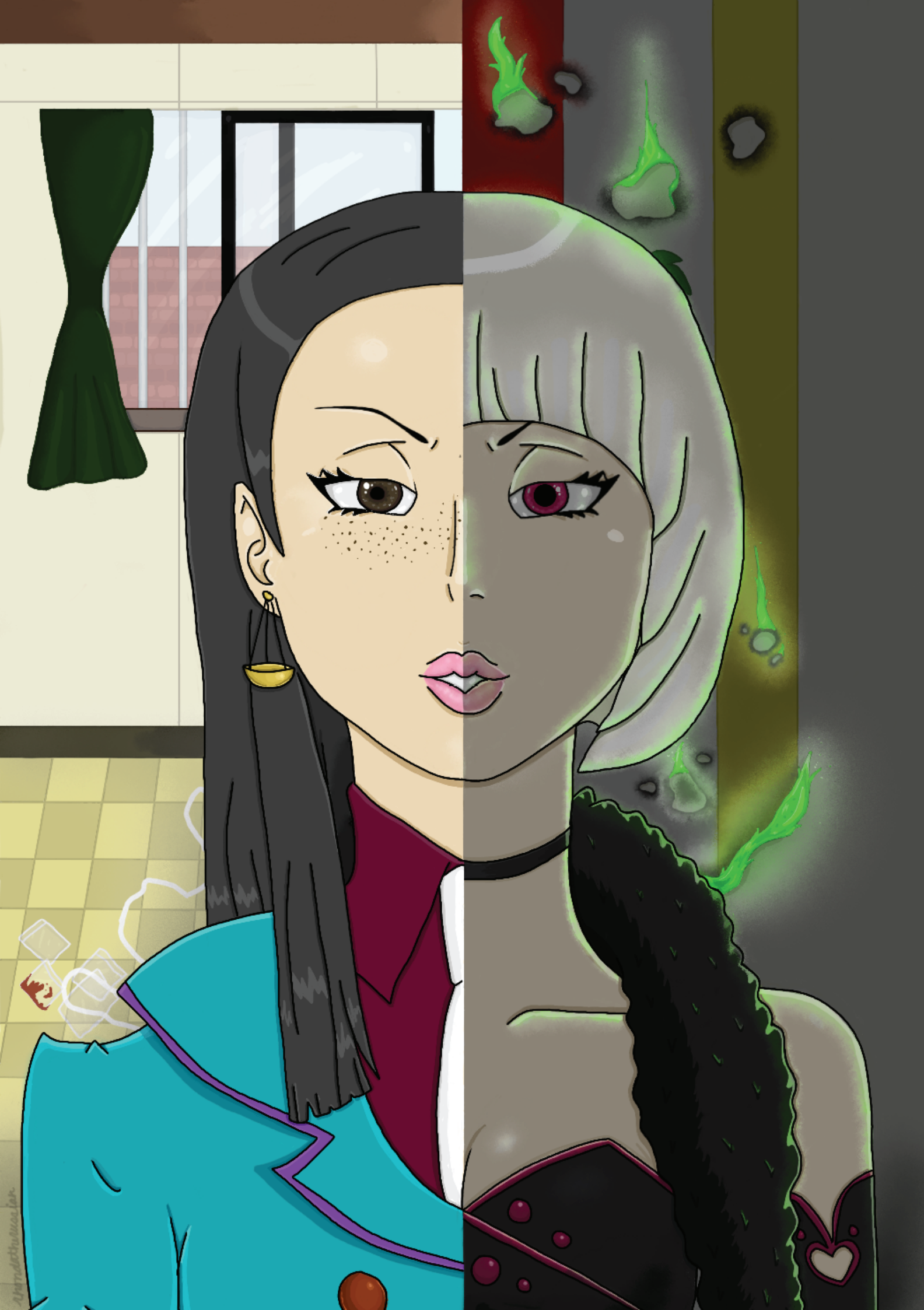
Diego watched him go, before laughing to himself - quietly, even bitterly - and standing to his feet, leaving his cup half empty to be swept away with the rest of them.

Ace Attorney Investigations: Miles Edgeworth



Suspects
Genderfeel,
Rebeka,
Hunter







Gyakuten Kenji 2

Suspects
19, Fay,
Lawrencía Y.





Zehatz gabezia (Lack of exactitude)

By Fay

Manosuke has a sip of his soda, staring intently at the piece of paper on his living room table. He leaves the can on the surface of the table, and silently scratches the back of his neck. The TV is on, and even if it usually helps him to think with its white noise, that night it's just annoying. He grabs the remote control, and turns it off, with a groan. He resists the urge to just pick a cigar, as Souta warned him, very nervously, about how draining smoking is for your health.

Damn, his brain is gonna burst.

Since when does Souta play chess like this, anyway? He is such an offensive player, something that does not seem to fit him at all, but Manosuke knows better. He frowns, his mind lost for a couple of seconds. Of course he knows better.

He cannot think about it for too long, since his phone beeps a couple of times, and he dutifully looks at the notifications. Maybe it's something related to work, after all.

Unsurprisingly, Souta's profile picture greets him. It's Money the monkey, this time, and Manosuke kinda wishes he took more photos of the cat he gifted his best friend. According to Souta, though, the hairy beast is just too much of a cryptid to be taken off guard while being photogenic. Manosuke believes him. He wonders why he never takes photos of himself, no matter how much Manosuke reassures him he is indeed photogenic. Unlike himself, who always looks like a drunk horse.

The text provokes an instantaneous reaction.

"Can I call you?" it says, and Manosuke cannot help but worry. If his status as a bodyguard is the cause or the consequence of his worry about his best friend, he does not know, and does not want to think about it.

He is the one calling Souta, and when a tired and shaky voice greets him, his concern deepens.

"What's wrong? You okay?"

"Yeah, yeah, I'm just..." Souta pauses, as if looking for the exact words. "... tired. That must be it. Yeah, yeah, probably."

Manosuke sighs, massaging his temples. Here we go again.

“You can be honest with me. Ya sound scared.”

He can almost feel Souta flinching, miles away. He knows him, better than Souta gives him credit for. There are things he indeed does not know, or cannot remember, but he can feel his mood, and he knows it's never as carefree as Souta would like him to think.

Manosuke suddenly realises that their game of chess is infinitely easier than their lives as human beings, and sighs.

“Scared? No way, no way. It's just. I don't know. A bad night. One of those.”

It's all Manosuke needs to know, for the moment. Souta gets terribly anxious sometimes, when he is alone with his thoughts. If they are together, he will stay with him playing videogames or binge watching that superhero series Souta loves that much.

“You had dinner?”

“Ehm, I'm preparing instant noodles right now.”

“Souta, instant noodles are not exactly the healthiest dinner, ya know.”

“I just got into the dressing room! And I'm super hungry...” Souta sighs, and then whines. “I have been wearing my binder for more than I'm used to today. Everything huuurts...”

“I... was gonna tell ya to take care of yerself better, but I guess I'm not one to tell ya.”

And Souta laughs. Manosuke smiles, relieved.

“Manosuke, did you fall down the stairs again?”

“No!” he retorts, half laughing.

“Suspicious. I don't believe you, no way, no way.”

They both chuckle a little, and he can feel Souta smiling when he catches his breath again. He wonders if it's one of those sad smiles he hates.

“I feel a lil’ better. Thanks, ‘Nosuke”

“Hey, no problem. Best friends help each other, remember?”

“Yeah...”

“In fact, I was thinking about you. Your last move was... interesting. Are you trying new styles?”

Souta giggles, a little bitterly, but Manosuke does not ask about it. They are both tired that night, after all.

“It’s a secret! Magicians don’t reveal their secrets.”

“Souta, you are an animal tamer, not a magician.”

They both chat for some minutes, until Manosuke remembers it’s almost midnight, and that Souta was going to have dinner when he called him.

“Hey, nerd. Eat your noodles and go to sleep, ‘kay? No binge watching superhero movies tonight, though. Yer not a kid anymore.”

“How... how did you know...?”

“Best friend privileges. They teach you to read minds in the last level.”

“You’re a dummy.”

He is probably the only person to be able to even gently insult him and not get a single scratch. Best friend privileges, right?

When he hangs up, his next chess move somehow looks easier. More logical. He writes it down, with neat looking characters, even if he has to take his time. He challenges Souta, teasing him about a coming checkmate.

He is falling asleep in his chair, his neck hurting like hell, but he does not mind. His calloused fingers carefully caress the paper, and he thinks, not without bitterness, about how much he would like if life was as easy, logical, and exact as chess.

Manosuke has always been, sadly, an unlucky man

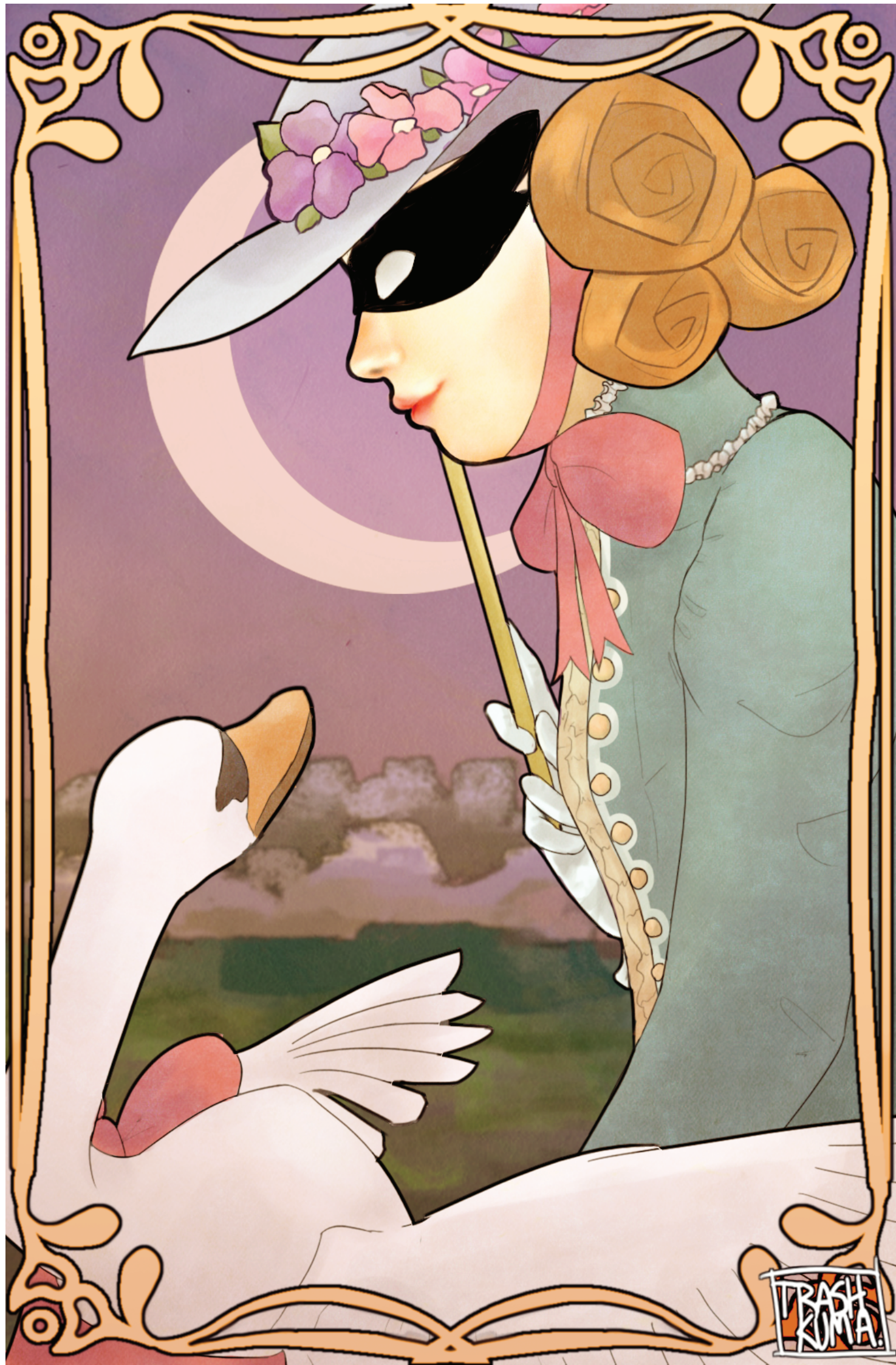


Dai Gyakuten Saiban= Naruhodō Ryūnosuke no Bōken



Suspects
Sorrel Cloud,
Ash





Professor Layton
vs.
Phoenix Wright =
Ace Attorney



Primary
Suspect!
Ky

By Ky

'What I have done cannot be forgiven. I can never escape from it.'

The words had echoed in Jean Greyerl's head too many times to count. They weren't her words, but she'd been the one to read them out loud during the trial that had nearly spelled her end.

It had been some time since then. So much had happened during that trial, it had taken weeks to even process all of it. By then, the secret of Labyrinthia had been revealed to everyone, and Jean had been freed from prison, allowed to go home, allowed to return to her life of maintaining the late Newton Belduke's household and studying the knowledge he'd left to her.

Yes, Master Belduke, the person who'd saved her life, raised her, instructed her, protected her, and believed in her completely. And even in the face of all his behavior, she'd allowed herself to believe he was going to betray her.

In a moment of rage, she'd tried to kill him. For months, she even thought she'd succeeded.

And then, the visitor Phoenix Wright came to Labyrinthia, and in short order exposed her as a witch, during one of the witch trials. This, of course, because she'd framed the person who was to him as Jean was to Master Belduke. And near the end of that trial, she'd read Master Belduke's final letter out loud for the court.

'What I have done cannot be forgiven. I can never escape from it.'

Jean didn't know how many times she'd heard those words in her head, but on a particular night she decided she'd had enough of it.

She slipped out of bed and snatched up a candle, lighting it and taking it to the hallway with her. With a subdued shuffling, she settled into Master Belduke's desk in his office, lighting a lamp and setting the candle down nearby. She got out a quill, and a blank sheet of parchment, and began to write.

*My dear Master Belduke,
The only sentiment I can start with is: I'm sorry.*

I'm sorry I could not solve the mystery of Labyrinthia on my own. Perhaps, if I had applied myself more fully to the question of the bell tower's appearance, I could have discovered something that would save you.

Far beyond that, I'm sorry that I desecrated your body out of a misguided sense of self-preservation. I doubted you, and assumed the worst of you, and that's the most damning course I could have taken.

Further still, I framed the stranger Maya Fey for my crimes, when she and Espella Cantabella later put their lives on the line for me in return. I could not have shifted blame onto a person less worthy of it.

What I have done can never be forgiven. And, indeed, I can never escape from it. Words cannot express how much I miss you. Your confidence and guidance would have given me much more hope over these arduous months.

I can only hope, if you're somehow watching my life now, you can find it in yourself to forgive me.

Jean looked down at the completed letter. It was to her satisfaction. There wasn't any part of her regret that wasn't in some way reflected in what she'd written.

She picked it up in one hand, and read it over one final time.

As her eyes reached the last sentence, the corner of the parchment reached the light of the candle.

Jean silently watched as the flame consumed the parchment in her hand. It spread slowly downward, her words progressively turning to ash.

There was something else Master Belduke had said in his letter.

'If the fate handed to her by this town has made her life an ordeal until now, I hope from the bottom of my heart that a wonderful story awaits her next.'

She flicked the final cinder of her letter into the air. "As I recall," she said aloud, "your position would be known to the world outside Labyrinthia as a medical doctor." She stood up, casting her eyes on the books around the room. "Then it's time for me to get to work on becoming one, myself."

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& the LEZ staff

Thank you everyone who participated in Lawful Evil Zine! This zine wouldn't have been possible without all of your hard work, and it wouldn't have been what it is without each and every single one of you.

LAMEFUL EVIL ZINE
2018



Sorry + thanks for
wait + so patient!
being a cup of
I owe you a cup of
coffee, let me know
when
—Uma

